French's Acting Edition 2s 6d net

MADAME DE . . .

A Play in One Act

JEAN ANOUILH

Translated by
JOHN WHITING

Music by
JOHN HOTCHKIS

REF

R
842.912
Ano.

SAMUEL FRENCH LIMITED

BI 3382789 3

MADAME DE . . .

by

JEAN ANOUILH

(Based on a story by Louise de Vilmorin)

Translated by

JOHN WHITING

Music by

JOHN HOTCHKIS

LINK

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF ACTING

FOR REFERENCE ONLY

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY DISCARDED

LONDON
SAMUEL FRENCH LIMITED

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF ACTING

SAMUEL FRENCH LTD
26 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON
SAMUEL FRENCH INC
25 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK
7623 SUNSET BOULEVARD, HOLLYWOOD
SAMUEL FRENCH (CANADA) LTD
27 GRENVILLE STREET, TORONTO
SAMUEL FRENCH (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD
ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST BUILDING
153 DOWLING STREET, SYDNEY

© 1959 by Jean Anouilh and John Whiting

All Rights Reserved

The copying by manuscript, typescript, photography, or any other means of reproduction of this play either in whole or in part is an infringement of the copyright.

BIRMINGHAM
Book no. 33827893
Subject no. R 842.912 Ano
SCHOOL OF ACTING

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
LATIMER, TREND AND CO. LTD, PLYMOUTH
MADE IN ENGLAND

MADAME DE . . .

Produced at The Arts Theatre Club, London, on the 29th January 1959, with the following cast of characters:

(*in the order of their appearance*)

A Young Man, the pianist	*John Warner*
Madame de . . .	*Elizabeth Sellars*
Monsieur de . . ., her husband	*Douglas Wilmer*
The Maid	*Doris Groves*
Van Puck, a jeweller	*James Wellman*
The Ambassador	*Geoffrey Keen*
1st Footman	*Anthony Blake*
2nd Footman	*Norman Pitt*

Directed by Peter Hall

Décor by Tom Keogh

Music by John Hotchkis

The action of the Play passes in the year 1880

This play is fully protected under the copyright laws of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the United States of America, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

Any public performance or reading of the play, either in its entirety or in the form of excerpts, given without the prior consent of the owners of the copyright is an infringement of the copyright.

The fee for each and every performance of this play by amateurs in the British Isles is £1 11s. 6d. This fee is payable in advance to us, or to our authorized agents.

Upon payment of the fee a licence will be issued for the performance to take place. **No performance may be given unless this licence has first been obtained.**

In territories overseas the fee for performance will be quoted upon application to our authorized agents, or direct to us.

The following particulars are needed for the issue of a licence:

Title of the play
Name of the Society
Name of the theatre or hall
Name of the town
Dates of the performances
Name and address of the applicant

Please state the amount remitted with the application.

SAMUEL FRENCH LIMITED
26 Southampton Street
Strand, London, W.C.2

Character costumes and wigs used in the performance of plays contained in French's Acting Edition may be obtained from Messrs CHARLES H. FOX LTD, 184 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

The music for this play is available from Samuel French Ltd.

MADAME DE . . .

SCENE.—*Paris, 1880.*

A grand piano and stool are set R *on the stage as if for a recital. Beyond is a front-cloth depicting the façade of a small town house in the period of 1880. This is like a little theatre set within a theatre.*

When the CURTAIN *rises, the stage is empty. The* YOUNG MAN *enters down* L. *He is very Proustian and wears evening dress. He bows to the audience, crosses to the piano, sits and casually starts to improvise a waltz, in the manner of the time, which will serve as a leitmotiv.*

MUSIC NO. 1

The YOUNG MAN *stops playing. A* TUMBLER, C *of the* FAÇADE, *is raised revealing a boudoir, set behind a gauze. There is a dressing-table* C *with its back to the audience. The mirror frame only is used and* MADAME DE *can be seen, sitting at the dressing-table, facing the audience.*

YOUNG MAN (*nonchalantly*) In a society where a woman's success and reputation depend less on her beauty than on her elegance, Madame de—(*he plays a chord*) was distinction itself. (*He plays a chord*) She set the style for a whole way of life. Men believed there could be no other woman like her. So, of course, other women did their best to copy her. At least, they caught an echo of the compliments which were constantly being paid to her.

(*As the* YOUNG MAN *continues to speak, the following business takes place in dumb show.* MADAME DE *tries on a hat in front of her mirror. She is obviously delighted with it.*

MONSIEUR DE *enters up* L, *goes to Madame de, kisses her hand and congratulates her*)

Monsieur de was a rich man. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 2

(*Over the music*) He was proud of his wife and allowed her anything. He never questioned the money she spent, so there was no reason to think that he might disapprove.

(MADAME DE *tries on a second hat*)

Yet, like many people, she was driven by a mixture of weakness and bravado to pretend. (*He stops playing*) When her husband admired something she'd bought, such as a new hat, she couldn't resist saying that it had cost a little less than the real price.

(MONSIEUR DE *exits up* R. MADAME DE *takes off the hat*)

So Madame de kept from her husband just how much money she owed. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 3

(*The* MAID *enters up* L, *and, in an embarrassed way, gives Madame de a bill, then exits up* L)

(*He continues, with an odd little tune*) After some years of this game she was faced with large debts. At first this worried her, then made her anxious, and finally she was in despair. (*He stops playing*)

(MADAME DE *gropes in the drawer of her dressing-table and takes out a bundle of bills. As the* YOUNG MAN *continues,* MADAME DE *artlessly tries to think of a solution and mimes more or less what the Young Man says*)

It was all the more difficult to tell her husband about the bills because she'd lied for such a long time, and he'd never been anything but generous. She didn't want to lose his admiration or his trust, and so there was only one thing to be done. She must sell some jewellery.

(MADAME DE *opens her jewel-box*)

She opened her jewel-box. It would be unwise, she thought, to get rid of an heirloom: equally unwise to sell a quantity of cheap jewellery, for she would have to explain its disappearance. So she decided to sell a pair of ear-rings. They were diamonds——

(MADAME DE *holds up the ear-rings*)

—cut in the shape of hearts——

MUSIC NO. 4

—a magnificent present from her husband on the day after their wedding.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who continues speaking. During the* BLACK-OUT *a* FRONT-CLOTH *falls but the outline of the house remains. The cloth, painted in trompe l'oeil, represents a jeweller's shop.* MADAME DE, *at the same time, rises, picks up her hat and cape, puts them on, collects her gloves and parasol and exits* R. *A* FOOTMAN *quickly sets an armchair* R *and exits. The* LIGHTS *come up*)

She took them to the jeweller. He was a discreet man—friend as well as tradesman to the best people—

MUSIC NO. 5

(MADAME DE *and* VAN PUCK, *the jeweller, enter* R. VAN PUCK *sets the armchair* RC *for* MADAME DE, *who sits*)

MADAME DE. You'll think I'm being very foolish, Monsieur van Puck.

VAN PUCK (*crossing above the armchair to* C) That would surprise me, madame.

MADAME DE. I have decided to part with some jewels. (*She hands the ear-rings to van Puck*) These diamond hearts. I believe you sold them to Monsieur de on the day after our marriage.

VAN PUCK (*examining the ear-rings with his jeweller's glass*) That's so, Madame.

(MADAME DE *stares at him*)

Your decision distresses me—on your account. For myself, I'm rather pleased. They are lovely things. I regretted selling them.

MADAME DE. Then at least I've made you happy this morning. I won't ask how much they're worth. Monsieur de wouldn't like me to be told. (*She rises*) Let me send my maid here tomorrow. You can settle the price with her.

VAN PUCK (*ill at ease*) Is your decision final, madame? I don't like the idea . . .

MADAME DE (*smiling*) You must get used to it, Monsieur van Puck. I've already done so. It's always sad to get rid of something one loves, but it must happen to you more often than to me.

VAN PUCK. It's my business, madame. But losing some stones breaks my heart.

MADAME DE. Put these in its place, Monsieur van Puck. At least be wholehearted. I won't offend you by asking you to keep this secret.

VAN PUCK (*suddenly a little uncertain*) Madame, we family jewellers are rather like father confessors . . .

MADAME DE (*interrupting kindly but flatly*) Thank you. I'm already provided for in that way. All I ask is that you don't tell anyone that I've disposed of these.

VAN PUCK (*rather muddled; stammering*) I meant to say—I thought perhaps I might . . . Forgive such a blunt question, but —what will you tell your husband, madame?

MADAME DE (*about to go*) I shall say . . . I shall say that I lost them. It would hardly be a lie. (*She moves to* R *of him*) This is not being wise after the event, Monsieur van Puck, but one of the clasps holds very badly.

VAN PUCK (*the glass thrust in his eye; horrified*) *Madame!*

MADAME DE. Mind you don't lose them yourself.

(MADAME DE *crosses and exits* L)

VAN PUCK (*following Madame de to* L) Madame! Madame!

(*There is a short comic flourish on the piano by the* YOUNG MAN.

MUSIC No. 6

VAN PUCK, *worried, crosses to* C, *bent over the ear-rings, the glass in his eye*)

YOUNG MAN. The clasp held perfectly well. And so the jeweller decided that Monsieur de must have secret money troubles and thought it best to negotiate through his wife. (*He plays*)

MUSIC No. 7

The jeweller considered himself extremely tactful in pretending not to guess this. (*He stops playing*)

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who continues speaking. During the* BLACK-OUT *the curtain of the jeweller's shop is raised and in its place is a window-frame filled with painted plants, beyond which a ball can be seen taking place in shadow play.* VAN PUCK *exits down* L *in the* BLACK-OUT)

Madame de paid her debts and her beauty seemed enriched.

MUSIC No. 8

(*A* FOOTMAN *quickly sets a chair* R, *crosses and exits down* L. *The* LIGHTS *come up.* MADAME DE *with her* PARTNER *is dancing* R, *and* MONSIEUR DE *with his* PARTNER *is dancing* L)

There was a ball that night. Madame de suddenly put her hands to her ears and cried out . . .

MADAME DE (*stopping dancing*) Oh, my God!

(*The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing,* MONSIEUR DE *stops dancing*)

I've lost my ear-rings!

(*The* YOUNG MAN *resumes playing*)

MUSIC No. 9

HER PARTNER. But, my dear lady, you were not wearing any.

MADAME DE (*putting her hands over her ears*) Yes, I was. I'm sure I had them. (*She runs to Monsieur de*) My ear-rings. The two hearts. I've lost them—dropped them somewhere. Look. Look. Oh, how wretched.

(*Everyone looks around, bending down. Only* MONSIEUR DE *stays upright, shrugging his shoulders. The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

MONSIEUR DE. You were not wearing ear-rings this evening.

MADAME DE. I was.

MONSIEUR DE. I'm quite sure of it. I noticed it as we were coming out, but I didn't say anything because we were already late.

MADAME DE (*plaintively*) You're wrong. As usual. I even hesitated between my hearts and my emeralds. And I chose my hearts.

MONSIEUR DE. Then you've left them on your dressing-table. Or you kept them in your hand meaning to put them on in the carriage. You often do that.

MADAME DE. The carriage! Yes, I must have dropped them in the carriage.

(*The* YOUNG MAN *begins to play a sad version of the Waltz.*

MUSIC NO. 10

MADAME DE *runs off* R.

MONSIEUR DE *very calmly follows her off. The couple remaining continue to dance*)

YOUNG MAN (*over the music*) People were embarrassed by the incident. No-one liked to dance any more, the band stopped—(*he stops playing*) and the party ended.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man. During the* BLACK-OUT *a* FRONT-CLOTH *falls depicting Monsieur de's library. It is painted in trompe l'oeil. The* COUPLE *exit in the* BLACK-OUT. *The* FOOTMEN *set a chair* R *and a chair and table* L. *On the table there is a pen, an inkstand, a box of matches and an ash-tray. The* FOOTMEN *exit. A* NEWSBOY *is heard off, shouting*)

NEWSBOY (*off; shouting*) Paper! Paper! Paper!

YOUNG MAN. The next morning the matter was in the newspapers. They let it be understood that the ear-rings had been stolen. The jeweller, who was very upset by this, decided to go and see Monsieur de, who received him at once. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 11

(*The* LIGHTS *come up.*

VAN PUCK *enters* R.

MONSIEUR DE *enters up* L *and crosses to van Puck. The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

MONSIEUR DE. Good morning, van Puck. What brings you here? I suppose you've come to tempt me.

VAN PUCK. No, my dear sir. I'm sorry, but it's not that. I've never been in such a difficult position. Before I worry you, and perhaps annoy you, I must ask you to be discreet.

MONSIEUR DE (*crossing to the chair* L *and sitting*) Good Lord, van Puck. A secret?

VAN PUCK. A secret and a matter of good faith, monsieur.

MONSIEUR DE. All right, I promise. Go on.

VAN PUCK. I received a visit from Madame de yesterday.

MONSIEUR DE (*a little surprised*) She wanted something mended?

VAN PUCK (*moving slightly* R) Unfortunately, no.

MONSIEUR DE. She wanted to buy something? (*He pauses*) Don't tease me, van Puck. I'm not at my best in the morning.

VAN PUCK. She wanted to sell something, monsieur. Madame de brought me these—(*he hands the ear-rings to Monsieur de*) two diamond hearts saying that she wanted to get rid of them.

(MONSIEUR DE *examines the ear-rings*)

I found it hard to believe that madame would dispose of something so valuable without your knowledge.

(MONSIEUR DE *puts the ear-rings on the table*)

I wanted to be of service to you, for we all have bills which fall due. On the other hand, I had to indicate to Madame de, who asked me to keep the transaction secret, that I must pretend to think that you were not concerned. I did this with just enough—not irony, I would not allow myself that—but just enough indifference to let her know that I knew very well that she would know that I knew . . .

MONSIEUR DE (*laughing*) That was very good of you, van Puck, if a trifle involved. Rash, however.

VAN PUCK. I realized that this morning when I read in the paper that they suspect the jewels to have been stolen.

MONSIEUR DE (*cheerfully*) There is a moral conclusion to this story, van Puck. It is that there are fewer thieves about than we are led to believe—and that should make us very happy. The actual conclusion should make us equally happy—you, anyway. I'm going to buy the jewels again.

VAN PUCK. I'm very unhappy having to sell them to you a second time.

MONSIEUR DE (*bursting into laughter*) Don't apologize. I'm very pleased to have them back. (*He takes out his cheque-book*) I suppose the price is still the same.

VAN PUCK (*horrified*) Oh, Monsieur . . .

MUSIC NO. 12

(*The business of the cheque is concluded in mime.* MONSIEUR DE *and* VAN PUCK *continue to chatter happily*)

YOUNG MAN. Monsieur de was sad to find that his wife had been lying to him for so long. By hiding her debts she'd harmed his credit and reputation. Her heartless deception the night before at the ball, when she pretended to be robbed, shocked him. (*He plays a few bars then stops playing*)

(MONSIEUR DE *rises and exits* L. VAN PUCK *follows him off*)

Yet he gave no sign of what he was feeling as he showed out

Monsieur van Puck, but made a few masculine jokes about the fallibility of reliable women.

MUSIC NO. 13

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who continues speaking. During the* BLACK-OUT *the* FOOTMEN *enter, move the chairs of the previous scene to* R *and* L, *remove the table and exit. The library* CLOTH *rises, revealing a screen behind which are silhouetted a* MAN *and a* WOMAN *sitting at a table at "Maxim's". They talk affectionately. Only a* MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL *who is serving them moves near them*)

That night, at *Maxim's*, Monsieur de had a friendly farewell supper with his mistress. She was a beautiful Spanish girl. (*He stops playing*) Monsieur de was beginning to fall violently out of love with her.

(*The* MAN *displays the ear-rings*)

And also she was going to South America the next day. As his wife had shown she cared nothing for the diamond hearts, Monsieur de decided that it would be amusing—and just—

(*The* MAN *hands the ear-rings to the Woman*)

to give them to this charming girl.

(*The* MAN *and the* WOMAN *pick up their glasses*)

They were a present to thank her for leaving him before he was compelled to leave her.

(*The* MAN *and the* WOMAN *clink their glasses. The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who plays.*

MUSIC NO. 14

A BLACK CURTAIN *falls. A small, lighted packet-boat crosses the* CURTAIN)

(*Over the music*) So Madame de's two diamond hearts crossed the Atlantic on their way to a new destiny. (*He stops playing as the boat disappears*)

(*In the* BLACK-OUT, *after the boat has crossed, the* BLACK CURTAIN *is raised and the* SALON CLOTH *is lowered. The* FOOTMEN *enter, set a footstool in front of the chair* R *and a small table up* L *of the chair* R, *on which there is a cup of tea, an ashtray, a box of matches, a hand-bell and a magazine*)

While this was happening, Monsieur de decided to have—well, not so frank a discussion as would embarrass him as much as his wife—but at least to try to put an end, an end he could look upon as final, to this story.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up.* MADAME DE *is seated beside the table, drinking tea and reading a magazine.*

MONSIEUR DE *enters* L, *crosses to Madame de, kisses her hand, then collects the chair from* L *and sets it* L *of the table*)

MADAME DE. Good gracious! Have you come to tea? It's so long since the last time that I've begun to think things. Have you any excuse?

MONSIEUR DE (*sitting* L *of the table*) What strange things you say. I like having tea with you very much. You are one of the few women of my acquaintance who drink tea in a proper way. Some women seem to be nourishing themselves, which is disgusting: others perform a rite, which is boring. But you seem to enjoy it.

MADAME DE. You're too kind. But it's true, I love tea. Let me ring for another cup.

MONSIEUR DE. No, thank you. I hate tea. I like to see you drink it, that's all. (*He leans forward*) I want to talk to you about this unfortunate affair.

MADAME DE (*looking straight at him*) What affair?

MONSIEUR DE. The diamond hearts.

MADAME DE (*reassured*) Of course.

MONSIEUR DE. Don't you think too much fuss is being made about it? It's unfortunate, of course, but it only concerns us.

MADAME DE. I quite agree. I find it very tiresome.

MONSIEUR DE. Up to now our name has only been in the newspapers when someone in the family has married or died. Or sometimes when I've made a particular ass of myself at the Horse Show. Now it's on the front page, among the crimes. Although we're the victim and not the criminal, it's not very pleasant. You don't suspect anyone?

MADAME DE (*looking away*) No. (*She pauses and looks at him*) Look, the more I think of it the more I believe you're right. I lost the ear-rings. But if you'd only told me that I wasn't wearing them that night, I shouldn't have been so absent-minded. I was late, and I meant to carry them and put them on in the carriage. And then I forgot. You were talking, weren't you? It's a weakness of mine always to concentrate on what you're saying.

MONSIEUR DE. You are quite sure you lost the jewels?

MADAME DE. Quite sure.

MONSIEUR DE. Well, just say that you've found them.

MADAME DE. I hadn't thought of that.

MONSIEUR DE. One never thinks of the obvious. (*He rises*) If you take my advice, you'll have the horses harnessed and go straightway and tell our hosts. Apologize for the scene at their ball the other night. Perhaps you haven't thought about it—you were always ruled more by your heart than your head—but it was very unpleasant for everybody.

MADAME DE. You're right. (*She rises and crosses to* L) It was unforgivable. I'll go at once. (*She turns, radiant*) But it would be a lie.

MONSIEUR DE. My dear, with things as they are . . . (*He picks up Madame de's cup and saucer*)

MADAME DE. Do you want to know what I think?

MONSIEUR DE (*smiling; lightly*) Don't be absurd. I know.

(MADAME DE *hesitates then exits* L. MONSIEUR DE *tries to drink the dregs from the tea-cup. He grimaces, puts down the cup and lights a cigar*)

YOUNG MAN. Monsieur de did not like tea. And he did not know what his wife was thinking. All the same, he was satisfied. His cigar was excellent, and he believed he'd settled the exasperating business of the hearts in an intelligent way. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 15

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who continues speaking. The* FOOTMEN *enter* R *and* L, *remove the table, footstool, etc., set the chairs* R *and* L *and exit*)

But it was not settled—far from it. The beautiful Spanish girl in the Argentine found she missed Monsieur de. She'd never been in love with him, but there are other reasons for needing a man. She spent quite a time trying to find someone else with as little gravity and as much money. Bored, she gambled. And won. (*He stops playing*) At first. It's the surest way of losing at roulette. And so lost. One day, penniless, she sold the hearts. The best jeweller in Buenos Aires kept them in his shop window less than a day. An ambassador of a country near to France was leaving the Argentine and being appointed to Paris. He was a man of taste and very rich. He saw the jewels, fell in love with them, and bought them before sailing for Europe. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 16

(*The* SALON CLOTH *is raised, showing the dining-room of an embassy. The scene is painted in trompe l'oeil to show large tapestries hung with tassels. Also painted are green plants which prevent us seeing anything but a small part of the long table immediately beneath a painted chandelier*)

Chance found the situation irresistible. A month later, at a dinner-party given in his honour by a colleague, the Ambassador was put at table beside Madame de. (*He continues playing*)

(*The* LIGHTS *come up. The* AMBASSADOR *and* MADAME DE *are sitting at the table side by side, and with their backs to us, are* MONSIEUR DE, *a* WOMAN *and another guest. One or two* SERVANTS *stand about. The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

It was a great dinner. Madame de was at her wittiest that night. The Ambassador admired her very much. He had come to the dinner as a duty, but he found he wasn't bored. Far from it. He was fascinated and showed it. Madame de knew how to interest men. And she was attracted, too. She liked to please people and from the first evening the Ambassador gave her the opportunity and provoked her vanity.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who continues speaking. The* SALON CLOTH *is lowered. The* FOOTMEN *set a table down* R *with a chair up* L *of it and two chairs, one up* R *and one up* L)

As they belonged to the same set of the same society, they often saw each other at dinners, balls and receptions. When they met they never offended convention by staying together too long in public. No, they would move away from the crowd as if they had something urgently important to talk about. (*He plays*)

MUSIC No. 17

Monsieur de had the good manners not to be upset by this. He knew his wife was faithful. But, of course, after some months of these meetings, the Ambassador and Madame de ended by confiding in each other. (*He stops playing*)

(*The* LIGHTS *come up on Madame de's salon.* MADAME DE *is seated by the table. The* AMBASSADOR *is standing* L. *He has a slight and charming accent, perhaps Rumanian*)

AMBASSADOR. It's become a pleasant habit to call on you late each afternoon. I am a man of habit. And it frightens me.

MADAME DE. Why?

AMBASSADOR. Each time we indulge ourselves, we die a little.

MADAME DE. Really, I find nothing so morbid in seeing you every afternoon in my drawing-room.

AMBASSADOR (*crossing and sitting on the chair up* R) My job makes for a nomadic life. I'm never sure where I shall be tomorrow. When a man has unlimited freedom forced on him he finds it difficult to found any lasting relationship. Who are you expecting today?

MADAME DE. No-one. I had the doorman told I was ill and that I couldn't receive anybody.

AMBASSADOR (*rising*) I'm so sorry. (*He moves* L) The doorman didn't see me come in. I walked here, it is such a lovely day. I'm sorry. I've disobeyed your orders, even though I didn't know about them.

MADAME DE (*rising; gaily*) My doorman was wideawake. He was told that I would receive you.

(*The* YOUNG MAN *plays a few notes*)

MUSIC No. 18

AMBASSADOR (*blushing*) I'm so sorry.

MADAME DE. Again? What is it about today that makes you so repentant? (*She sits on the chair up* R) I've also formed an agreeable habit. It is to be entertained by you.

AMBASSADOR (*sitting on the chair up* L; *laughing*) I've learnt to unravel the subtleties of most European diplomats. That's not so difficult. Few of them are Talleyrand, after all. But a Parisienne's wit still baffles me. The Republic should think of employing women like you.

MADAME DE (*carelessly*) It wouldn't occur to them. Nor to us. Women have plenty of other things to do. They must dress, please people, and kill time. All that takes ages.

AMBASSADOR. Do you like pleasing people?

MADAME DE. I've always thought, perhaps innocently, that diplomacy was the art of not asking certain questions.

AMBASSADOR. So far I've managed to hide this fact from various ministers. (*Softly*) I'm not a very good diplomat. Don't tell anyone. They'd send me God knows where and I shouldn't be able to see you.

MADAME DE (*with sudden tenderness*) Then I'll certainly not tell anyone.

(*There is a short embarrassed silence between them. The* YOUNG MAN *plays a few notes*)

MUSIC No. 18a

AMBASSADOR (*suddenly; with a change of manner*) I've been a very dull dog these last two weeks, all alone in Paris. Was it pleasant at Cap d'Ail?

MADAME DE. The sun was shining. I've never really understood why people think the sun so important.

AMBASSADOR. I met your husband several times at the club while you were away—he didn't understand why you'd gone, either—and he told me that you loved the sun.

MADAME DE. It's a rumour I put about so as to get away from Paris alone, in December.

(*There is another short silence. The* YOUNG MAN *plays a few notes*)

MUSIC No. 18b

AMBASSADOR. How was the mimosa?

MADAME DE. The mimosa. It was yellow—it was—mimosa.

AMBASSADOR. I thought you loved that, too. I imagined it showering down on you as you sat writing letters. Funny thing—I don't suppose you noticed—but there were a few grains in your last letter. (*He pauses briefly*) The one in which you told me about your solitary walks on the rocks in the rain.

MADAME DE. Oh, that was heavenly! I might have been in Normandy. For once the place stopped looking like the picture

postcards. But usually it's a setting for cut and dried feelings. They say that nine out of ten couples spend their honeymoon there. Imagine learning to love each other in such a place. No wonder most marriages fail.

AMBASSADOR (*thoughtfully*) Where can people learn to love each other?

(*The light begins to dim as twilight falls*)

MADAME DE. In Paris, in dry dull weather, like today. Or in the country with a log fire and the rain tapping on the window. Do you know Grosbois? It's in the Beauvaisis. I'll ask my husband to invite you there for the boar hunting. I sometimes go alone for two or three days in the winter.

(*After a short pause the* YOUNG MAN *plays a few notes*)

MUSIC No. 18c

AMBASSADOR (*suddenly rising; whispering*) I can't keep this up.

MADAME DE (*rising; simply*) Neither can I. (*She moves towards him*) It's just a year ago today that we met for the first time. (*She is very close to him*)

(*The* AMBASSADOR *kisses Madame de, almost chastely, lightly touching her lips. A clock strikes the half hour*)

(*She nearly cries out*) Ah! (*She smiles*) It's that clock. Half past five already. Thursday then, in the country.

AMBASSADOR (*murmuring, as if bewildered*) Thursday! Three days. Oh, it's a long time—far too long.

(MONSIEUR DE *suddenly enters up* L, *rubbing his hands, noisy, frozen and happy*)

MONSIEUR DE. Good evening.

(MADAME DE *sits in the chair up* R)

I say, it's deliciously dark in here. My wife's not yet made up her mind to have electricity. Like her grandmother she always waits for a footman to bring the lamps. (*He crosses to the table* R *and lights the oil lamp. To the Ambassador*) Good to see you. (*He turns to Madame de*) My dear, Paris is in uproar.

MADAME DE (*lightly*) Has war been declared? And I am detaining an ambassador.

MONSIEUR DE. Worse than that, my dear. La Rascas won't be singing tonight. She muffed a note at this afternoon's performance and it made her so cross that she pretended the opera was bad. (*He crosses to* C) Garnier had foreseen it, God bless his top C. Just at the time we should be arriving like idiots, dressed up, to applaud her, La Rascas will be on the Milan express. If we want to hear her we must make for the Gare de Lyon to be at *La Scala*

tomorrow. I shall need some blankets and sandwiches. Are you coming?

AMBASSADOR. Certainly.

MONSIEUR DE. Then fill your flask. It'll be a nice little trip. (*He pauses. Flatly*) I don't make you laugh. The trouble with you foreign diplomats is that you will bring Europe into everything. Like a woman who is always on your mind but with whom you can never have fun, because she is such a proper person. Has my wife ever mentioned Grosbois?

(MADAME DE *turns away*)

Come down on Thursday for the boar hunt. It'll give you a rest. (*He crosses to Madame de and puts his arm around her*)

AMBASSADOR. I'm sorry. I can't—I'm not free on Thursday. I've already accepted another invitation.

MONSIEUR DE. Then let's say the following Thursday.

AMBASSADOR. Why must it be a Thursday?

MONSIEUR DE. My wife and I have kept the habit since childhood. We always plan our amusements for Thursdays.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *glances suspiciously at Madame de*)

AMBASSADOR (*moving to Monsieur de; with sudden melancholy*) I spent my childhood at a boarding-school, under a guardian. The other boys always went out on Thursdays. It's a sombre day for me. I've always put it aside to daydream. The playground was full again on Fridays, which is the day I keep for my amusements.

MONSIEUR DE (*casually*) How odd! Friday always makes me think of codfish. I loathe it.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *crosses and kisses Madame de's hand, about to take his leave*)

Anyway, we'll choose one of the other five days. And meet again.

(MONSIEUR DE *and the* AMBASSADOR *exit up* L. MADAME DE *is left alone, quite still, lost in thought. The* YOUNG MAN *plays a few notes*)

MUSIC No. 18d

YOUNG MAN. "He didn't dare to look at me," thought Madame de. "He loves me."

(MONSIEUR DE *re-enters*)

MONSIEUR DE (*crossing to Madame de*) Your suitor is charming. I know you're too sensible to encourage him if he wasn't. All the same, I find him rather a bore. Don't you?

MADAME DE (*casually*) No.

MONSIEUR DE. You've always had a liking for solemnity. So for

us to get along together I'm the one who's had to be a little hypocritical. What do you think of the bombshell?

MADAME DE (*confused*) What bombshell?

MONSIEUR DE. La Rascas not singing at the opera tonight.

MADAME DE (*more and more confused*) What opera?

(MONSIEUR DE *puts in his eyeglass and stares in surprise at Madame de. The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN *who, after a short pause, plays.*

MUSIC NO. 19

The FOOTMEN *remove the table and one chair and set two chairs* R *and* L. *The gauze is lowered*)

YOUNG MAN (*over the music*) Madame de spent a wretched night, neither happy nor guilty.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up behind the gauze.* MADAME DE *can be seen sitting in her salon, beyond the gauze, daydreaming*)

She stayed at home all the next day, lazy with love, alone in her sitting-room. She relived the incident of the day before, and doubted if it had ever happened. The Ambassador, who was announced at five o'clock as usual, put her mind at rest on that point. It had all certainly happened. (*He stops playing*)

(*A* FOOTMAN *enters up* L *and, in dumb show, announces someone. The* AMBASSADOR *enters up* L *and crosses to Madame de. The* FOOTMAN *exits*)

The Ambassador was solemn and seemed deeply moved.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *kisses Madame de's hand*)

"My love, my dear love," he began, "for some time now . . ."

(*The* YOUNG MAN *stops speaking and it is the* AMBASSADOR *who can be heard continuing*)

AMBASSADOR. . . . for some time now I've wanted to give you some jewels I have. (*He takes a jewel-case from his pocket*) They might have been made for you, and you richly deserve them. (*He opens the case and goes down on one knee beside Madame de*) You see these two hearts: they are ours. Keep them, hide them, and more than anything look on them as one. You can only wear them when we are alone. That makes me very happy.

MADAME DE (*bewildered and not believing her eyes*) Oh, it's impossible.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man*)

YOUNG MAN. It was quite possible. For a moment, Madame de was lost for words. All kinds of thoughts, one as mad as another, came into her head.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up.* MADAME DE *and the* AMBASSADOR *are in an embrace*)

Then she fell into the Ambassador's arms, murmuring "My love, my dear love!" with such sincerity that it brought tears to his eyes. All the same, he was rather taken aback that his present, magnificent as it was, had had such an effect on the woman he loved.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man*)

For although he came of a cautious race and although the conversation which followed—if you could only have heard it—was extremely fatuous—it was all about love—he was deeply in love with Madame de. And Madame de loved him, too, more than anything in the world. The rest of the story, alas, will prove that. She'd never been in love before. The two kisses were the first she'd ever received. Yet there occurred to this sensitive and honest woman a most idiotic idea. One of those ideas—both silly and commonplace—which only women can have. It will offend every man in this theatre, as it was to mortally offend the Ambassador when he came to learn of it.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up.* MADAME DE *has her arms round the Ambassador's neck*)

Dreamily, Madame de said . . . (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 20

(*The* AMBASSADOR *and* MADAME DE *rise*)

MADAME DE (*over the music*) Dearest, I want to wear these jewels proudly before the whole world. I want to have our two hearts always whispering of you in my ears.

(*The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

YOUNG MAN (*aside*) It was this that was so shocking.

MADAME DE. So let me tell a lie, since you will always know the truth.

YOUNG MAN (*softly*) And as she said this her eyes were as pure as water.

AMBASSADOR. A lie? What kind of lie?

MADAME DE. One which can easily be believed. (*She moves* R *and sits*) My mother's cousin has already given me half the jewels from her very beautiful collection. No-one would be surprised if she should send me these ear-rings. She hates my husband; they're on such bad terms he never sees her. And she has nothing to do with the rest of the family. I'll go and see her tomorrow morning and take her into my confidence.

AMBASSADOR (*dropping on one knee beside her*) You frighten me, my love. Why do you need a confidante?

MADAME DE (*tenderly*) My secret is too heavy. I shall be happier sharing it.

AMBASSADOR. Darling, you're so silly. It seems that unless a woman tells someone she must doubt both her love and her lover.

MADAME DE (*putting a finger on his mouth to silence him*) Stop talking psychology. It's always gloomy and usually wrong. Just let me have my happiness. We're visiting your house tonight. When you see me come in wearing our two hearts you'll know that we are one and that I am all yours. (*She gives him a light kiss*)

AMBASSADOR (*enchanted*) You're like a child. It's wonderful, just like a child.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN. *The* SALON CLOTH *is raised. A small* INSET *is set behind the gauze*)

YOUNG MAN. You must admit it was both very touching and very simple. Let me tell you how Madame de miraculously found her jewels again just as she was going out with her husband. They were in a pair of gloves she no longer wore, and which she'd sharply told her maid to find at the last moment. Now, Monsieur de knew quite well that he'd given those jewels to the Spanish girl some time before. And as he was less inclined than his wife to believe in miracles he began to think the matter over—something he rarely did.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up behind the gauze.* MADAME DE *is in a ball dress. The* MAID *is beside her, holding Madame de's gloves and the ear-rings.*

MONSIEUR DE *enters. He is in evening dress*)

MONSIEUR DE (*as he enters*) My dear . . .

MADAME DE. My gloves. (*She takes the ear-rings from the Maid*) Can you believe your eyes, my dear? My hearts.

(MONSIEUR DE *slowly puts in his eyeglass, looks at the ear-rings then takes them from Madame de and puts them in his pocket*)

What are you doing?

MONSIEUR DE (*coldly*) You cannot wear them. (*He takes her arm to lead her off*)

MADAME DE. But really, it's ridiculous! Give me my ear-rings. Why can't I wear them?

MONSIEUR DE. You have your secrets: I have mine.

(MADAME DE *and* MONSIEUR DE *exit* L. *The* MAID, *stupefied, is left alone*)

MAID. My! (*She calls as she rushes out*) Juliette! Juliette!

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT. *The* YOUNG MAN *plays.*

MUSIC NO. 21

The Gauze *is raised and the* Black Curtain *lowered. In front of the* Black Curtain *is set an upholstered bench in front of the outline of a small carriage window. The* Lights *come up.* Monsieur de *and* Madame de *are seated, silent, gently bouncing in time to the music, on their way to dine with the Ambassador*)

Young Man (*over the music*) Madame de did not dare to ask for the jewels again. They arrived at the embassy without having exchanged another word. (*He stops playing for a few moments then resumes*)

Music No. 22

(*The* Lights Black-Out *except for the Spots on the Young Man. The* Ballroom *window-frame is set. It is lit from behind to give a shadow play effect. When the* Lights *come up the* Ambassador *is in silhouette receiving* Guests *who shake hands and retire.* Madame de *and* Monsieur de *enter and are received by the* Ambassador)

(*He stops playing*) Monsieur de noticed the look which passed between his wife and the Ambassador. He was not spying on them and had no wish to see it. However, the look confirmed the conclusion he'd arrived at on the way to the *soirée musicale*.

Music No. 23

(*The silhouette of a* Violinist *with his instrument is seen to enter. He bows and there is applause. The* Violinist *then mimes "tuning-up" and playing the air played by the* Young Man. *At a diminuendo in the music the* Lights *fade to* Black-Out *except for the Spots on the Young Man who, on the last note of the music, continues speaking*)

He remembered that a year before the Ambassador had come from the same South American city where Monsieur de's former mistress had since been living. He thought it probable that she'd been short of money and had sold some jewels. He was not surprised that the Ambassador had bought them—Monsieur de's tastes did not incline towards platonic love affairs. All the same, he could understand that one day his wife had told the Ambassador how unhappy she'd been when, in debt, she'd had to sell some jewels she loved. And how, by an amazing coincidence—this was a little hard to find credible, but he must bring himself to believe it—the Ambassador, possessing those very jewels, had at once graciously offered to make her happy again. (*He plays*)

Music No. 23a

(*The* Lights *come up. The* Violinist *is miming the last movement —played of course by the Young Man. At a short pause in the music, just before the end, there is applause by mistake. The final bar is then played. There is applause!*

(*The* AMBASSADOR *sits down* R *with* MADAME DE *sitting* L *of him and* MONSIEUR DE *up* L *of Madame de*)

Looking at the matter this way Monsieur de could see no reason to take it amiss. He knew how to distinguish between a friendly and an impertinent act.

(MONSIEUR DE *rises and looks at Madame de*)

He told himself that the Ambassador, far from having wished to offer Madame de a present that she could not have accepted, had only wanted to help her repair the damage done by the lie—of which they both supposed her husband was unaware.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man*)

Even so, Monsieur de's honour would not allow him to admit that his wife had received such a valuable present from another man. So he took the Ambassador aside after the concert and led him into a drawing-room.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up. The* AMBASSADOR *rises and exits with* MONSIEUR DE *up* R. *They re-enter down* R *in front of the ballroom window and cross to* C)

MONSIEUR DE. My dear fellow, you couldn't have been more tactful. But, you see, I've good reason to know that my wife didn't find her ear-rings among some old pairs of gloves this evening. I can understand how you were tempted to help her. You gave her the opportunity of erasing the unhappiness she'd caused me when she sold the jewels I'd given her as a wedding present.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *moves slightly* R)

I've not spoken to her about it, because I think some things can destroy the harmony between husband and wife. Now it will upset me very much to see her wearing these ear-rings knowing that she owes them to your generosity. On the other hand, I'd like to have these diamonds again. So, as the simplest and friendliest conclusion, I suggest—if you agree—that you entrust them to my jeweller and tell him what I owe him for them.

(*The* AMBASSADOR, *very pale, slightly bows. The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man.*

The AMBASSADOR *and* MONSIEUR DE *exit* L *in the* BLACK-OUT. *The ballroom window-frame is raised and the* LIBRARY CLOTH *set. The* FOOTMEN *set chairs* R *and* L *with a table down* L *of the chair* L. *On the table there is a pen, an inkstand, an ashtray and a box of matches*)

YOUNG MAN. The Ambassador was very hurt. He found it hard to forgive Madame de for accepting as a token of his love jewels

which must have recalled her first love, her first favours, the intimacies of her married life. He felt himself in a ridiculous position. He saw insult and mockery in what she'd done. And all love died for Madame de. (*He plays*)

Music No. 24

He went to the jeweller next morning and gave him the diamond hearts. Then, pretending that an official despatch recalled him to his country, he disappeared without a word of farewell. (*He stops playing*)

(*The* Lights *come up.*
Van Puck *enters* L.
Monsieur de *follows him on. The* Young Man *plays a little tune to accompany* van Puck's *nervousness, but this stops abruptly as* Monsieur de *enters*)

Music No. 25

Van Puck (*taking the jewel-case from his pocket and gesturing helplessly*) Would you believe it, sir?

Monsieur de (*good-humouredly*) Yes, my dear fellow, I can believe it, because I know why you're here. (*He sits on the chair* L) Just tell me the price of what you have brought.

Van Puck (*moving to* R *of Monsieur de*) In selling you these jewels for a third time—a lamentable and profitable business—I wish they could cost less than they do. (*He puts a bill on the table in front of Monsieur de*) But they have passed through the hands of one of my colleagues in Buenos Aires and, dear me . . .

(Monsieur de *puts in his eyeglass and looks at the bill*)

But what a coincidence, sir.

(Monsieur de *removes his glass and philosophically takes out his cheque-book*)

Monsieur de. My dear van Puck, having established as a certainty that what is true is unlikely and that what is unlikely is true—nothing surprises me. Then we'll say . . . (*He fills in a cheque*)

(*The* Young Man *plays.*

Music No. 26

Monsieur de *hands over the cheque on the last note of the music.*
Van Puck *exits down* R. *The* Lights Black-Out. *The* Footmen *remove the table and set the chairs* R *and* L.)

Young Man. And so Monsieur de bought the ear-rings for a third time. How should one tell a story which ended so sadly? For it has all the appearance of a joke, as if fate were amusing itself—what is more, it's a true story. As soon as the jeweller had gone, Monsieur de rang for a footman and asked him if

Madame de was at home. He was told that she had gone to her room. Her face was flushed, yet she complained of being frozen. She'd taken to her bed.

(*The* LIBRARY CLOTH *is raised. The* LIGHTS *come up on Madame de's bedroom.* MADAME DE *is lying back on the pillow, pale and wan.* MONSIEUR DE *enters up* R, *with the jewel-case hidden behind his back*)

MONSIEUR DE. If I do you a favour, will you do the same for me?

MADAME DE. Of course. If any favour can still please me.

(MONSIEUR DE *reveals the jewel-case and calmly puts the ear-rings into* MADAME DE'S *trembling hands. She stammers, shyly, touchingly, like a bewildered child*)

Are they for me? Are they for me? Really?

MONSIEUR DE. Yes, but I insist that you come to the ball with me.

MADAME DE (*frightened*) What are you thinking of? I haven't been up for ten days.

MONSIEUR DE (*flatly*) You promised to do me a favour in return. If you won't, give me back the jewels.

MADAME DE (*pleading*) Please. Don't be cruel. Don't force me.

(MONSIEUR DE *sits on the edge of the bed, dry, elegant, almost mysterious in his clear-sightedness and refusal to dramatize*)

MONSIEUR DE. Be sensible and consider. Think of the position you've put me in. Think of the position in which you've put our friend, the Ambassador, who only tried to help you. We agree on that, don't we? If you are seen wearing these ear-rings tonight you'll set his conscience at rest, as well as mine. You'll dispel this miserable atmosphere from which all three of us have suffered and for which you're entirely responsible.

MADAME DE (*whispering*) How will he ever know?

MONSIEUR DE (*dryly*) He has come back. He'll be at the ball where I want to take you tonight.

(*They stare at each other in silence for a long time*)

YOUNG MAN (*softly*) Madame de knew the truth. She knew why the Ambassador had left her. She couldn't reveal this to her husband, but neither could she bear to part with the hearts which recalled her only two kisses. In a weak voice she answered . . .

MADAME DE. Very well. I will come.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the* YOUNG MAN, *who plays a brilliant version of the Waltz*)

MUSIC NO. 27

The BALLROOM *window-frame is set as before. The* LIGHTS *come up. The* DANCERS *are seen in silhouette. The* AMBASSADOR *is seen in silhouette down* R)

YOUNG MAN (*over the music*) Madame de's health had been affected by her deep unhappiness and by being shut in her room for a month. Monsieur de took no notice of this, nor of the bitterly cold February weather, and made his wife go to the ball.

(MADAME DE *and* MONSIEUR DE *enter up* L *in silhouette and cross to the Ambassador. The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

She arrived smiling, the diamonds sparkling at her ears. An ultimate beauty gave her magnificence. She held herself all the more upright for being near to collapse. She was still smiling when her eyes met those of the Ambassador who had seen her come in. He misunderstood her smile and why she wore the diamonds. Both seemed an act of defiance to him. He believed that by wearing the jewels, about which he knew the truth, Madame de meant to sweep away the past because now she despised it.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *kisses Madame de's hand*)

As he kissed her hand which she tenderly held out to him, he said: "I shall never forgive you." And while others crowded round her he turned away.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *exits up* R)

Monsieur de was in a good humour. His vanity had been satisfied. He was ready to make a night of it and although usually very courteous he forgot his wife for once and let her go home without him while he went on enjoying himself. (*He plays*)

MUSIC NO. 28

(MADAME DE *exits down* L. *The ball goes on wildly around Monsieur de. The* YOUNG MAN *continues to play for a little while. The* DANCERS' *silhouettes become imprecise and blurred as the* LIGHTS *dim out except for the Spots on the Young Man. The* GAUZE *is lowered. The* YOUNG MAN *stops playing*)

Madame de went to bed, sobbing, renouncing life and all wish for life. She wrote a line of humble prayer to the Ambassador imploring him to come and see her. And in the dawn of that February morning——(*he plays*)

MUSIC NO. 29

(*A dim* LIGHT *comes up. Snow is seen to be falling.*
MADAME DE *enters down* L, *crosses to* R *and exits*)

—throwing her flimsy cloak over her shoulders she went from the house unseen and ran like a madwoman through the snow to

the embassy. (*He stops playing*) Frozen, she rang the bell for a long time.

(*The* LIGHTS BLACK-OUT *except for the Spots on the Young Man. The ringing of a doorbell is heard off*)

At last the door was opened by a bad-tempered man, half asleep, half dressed in a forbidding uniform. He took the letter and slammed the door in Madame de's face.

(*A door is heard to slam*)

The next day she died.

(*The* LIGHTS *come up behind the gauze revealing Madame de's bedroom.* MADAME DE *is lying on her bed, her eyes shut, as if dead.* MONSIEUR DE *is seated at the foot of the bed, watching her*)

Neither health, love nor reason could tempt her to live. The Ambassador called that evening.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *enters down* R *in front of the gauze. He is sombre and handsome in a fur-lined coat. The sound of a doorbell is heard. A* FOOTMAN *enters up* L, *in dumb show informs Monsieur de that the Ambassador has called and exits.* MONSIEUR DE *rises, exits up* L *then enters down* L *and crosses to the Ambassador*)

MONSIEUR DE. My wife can't see anyone.

AMBASSADOR (*handing a crumpled letter to Monsieur de*) She sent for me.

(MONSIEUR DE *looks wretchedly at the letter then shrugs his shoulders*)

MONSIEUR DE (*simply*) Come with me.

(MONSIEUR DE *and the* AMBASSADOR *exit down* L, *then enter up* L *in the bedroom, both silent. The* AMBASSADOR *stands above the bed,* MONSIEUR DE *at the foot of it*)

YOUNG MAN. Madame de lay at the frontier of a new loveliness. The two men stood, motionless, looking down at her. She was still breathing, feebly and brokenly. Presently, feeling himself to be an intruder, the Ambassador was about to go, when Madame de, in a convulsive death agony, stretched out her arms——

(MADAME DE *stretches out her arms*)

—gave a sigh, and died. Her hands opened a little and there were the two diamond hearts as if she wished to offer them to the unknown.

(*There is a long silence.* MONSIEUR DE *bends over, closes his wife's eyes and takes the ear-rings from her hands*)

MONSIEUR DE (*moving to the Ambassador*) She is dead. (*He hands an ear-ring to the Ambassador*) Take this heart that she has given you. The other is her own. I'll dispose of it.

(*The* AMBASSADOR *slowly bows, takes the ear-ring, goes down on one knee, kisses Madame de's hand, rises and exits.* MONSIEUR DE, *left alone, stands for a moment looking down at his wife. Then he crosses her hands on her breast.*

The MAID *enters* L, *trembling*)

(*Simply*) Madame is dead.

(*The* MAID *sobs quietly. The* LIGHTS *dim slowly to* BLACK-OUT. *The* TUMBLER *falls. The* YOUNG MAN *rises*)

YOUNG MAN. So ends the story of Madame de and the two diamond hearts, which Monsieur de never had to buy again.

The YOUNG MAN *bows as—*

the CURTAIN *falls*

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOT

Grand piano and stool

EPISODE 1

On stage: Dressing-table with mirror frame. *On it:* 2 hats, gloves, jewel-box with heart-shaped ear-rings
In drawer: bundle of bills
Chair. *On back:* cape, parasol

EPISODE 2

Off stage: Armchair (FOOTMAN)

Personal: MADAME DE: ear-rings
VAN PUCK: jeweller's eyeglass

EPISODE 3

No properties

EPISODE 4

Off stage: Chair (FOOTMAN)
Table. *On it:* pen, inkstand, matches, ashtray (FOOTMAN)

Personal: VAN PUCK: ear-rings
MONSIEUR DE: cheque-book

EPISODE 5

Pre-set behind screen: Table. *On it:* 2 glasses
2 chairs

EPISODE 6

On stage: 2 chairs
Footstool
Table. *On it:* cup of tea, ashtray, matches, hand-bell, magazine

Personal: MONSIEUR DE: cigar

EPISODE 7

On stage: Banquet table
Chairs

EPISODE 8

On stage: 3 chairs
Table. *On it:* lamp, ashtray, matches

Personal: MONSIEUR DE: eyeglass

EPISODE 9

On stage: 2 chairs

Personal: AMBASSADOR: jewel-case with ear-rings

EPISODE 10

Personal: MAID: gloves, ear-rings
MONSIEUR DE: eyeglass

EPISODE 11

On stage: Upholstered bench

EPISODE 12

On stage: 3 chairs

EPISODE 13

On stage: 2 chairs
Table. *On it:* pen, inkstand, ashtray, matches

Personal: VAN PUCK: jewel-case with ear-rings, bill
MONSIEUR DE: eyeglass, cheque-book

EPISODE 14

On stage: Bed

Personal: MONSIEUR DE: jewel-case with ear-rings

EPISODE 15

No properties

EPISODE 16

On stage: Bed
Chair

Personal: AMBASSADOR: crumpled letter
MADAME DE: ear-rings

LIGHTING PLOT

Property fittings required: oil table lamp

To open:	General front lighting ½	
Cue 1	The YOUNG MAN sits at the piano *Spot on Young Man*	(Page 1)
Cue 2	TUMBLER rises *Bring up lights behind gauze*	(Page 1)
Cue 3	YOUNG MAN: ". . . after their wedding." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 2)
Cue 4	When jeweller's shop set *Bring up lights*	(Page 2)
Cue 5	YOUNG MAN: ". . . to guess this." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 4)
Cue 6	When ballroom set *Bring up lights*	(Page 4)
Cue 7	YOUNG MAN: ". . . the party ended." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 5)
Cue 8	YOUNG MAN: ". . . him at once." *Bring up lights*	(Page 5)
Cue 9	YOUNG MAN: ". . . of reliable women." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 7)
Cue 10	YOUNG MAN: ". . . at Maxim's . . ." *Bring up silhouette Spot*	(Page 7)
Cue 11	The MAN and WOMAN chink glasses BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 7)
Cue 12	YOUNG MAN: ". . . to this story." *Bring up lights*	(Page 7)
Cue 13	YOUNG MAN: ". . . an intel'igent way." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 9)
Cue 14	YOUNG MAN: ". . . beside Madame de." *Bring up lights*	(Page 9)
Cue 15	YOUNG MAN: ". . . provoked her vanity." BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 10)
Cue 16	YOUNG MAN: ". . . in each other." *Bring up lights to full*	(Page 10)
Cue 17	AMBASSADOR: ". . . love each other." *Commence slow dim of lights for twilight effect*	(Page 12)
Cue 18	MONSIEUR DE lights oil lamp *Bring in lamp* *Bring up lights to full*	(Page 12)
Cue 19	MONSIEUR DE stares at Madame de BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	(Page 14)
Cue 20	YOUNG MAN: ". . . happy nor guilty." *Bring up lights behind gauze*	(Page 14)

Cue 21	MADAME DE: ". . . impossible."	(Page 14)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 22	YOUNG MAN: ". . . into her head."	(Page 14)
	Bring up lights	
Cue 23	YOUNG MAN: ". . . woman he loved."	(Page 15)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 24	YOUNG MAN: ". . . learn of it."	(Page 15)
	Bring up lights	
Cue 25	AMBASSADOR: ". . . like a child."	(Page 16)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except spot on Young Man*	
Cue 26	YOUNG MAN: ". . . he rarely did."	(Page 16)
	Bring up lights behind gauze	
Cue 27	MAID: "Juliette! Juliette!"	(Page 16)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 28	When "carriage" set	(Page 17)
	Bring up lights	
Cue 29	YOUNG MAN: ". . . another word."	(Page 17)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Mad*	
Cue 30	When BALLROOM set	(Page 17)
	Bring up silhouette Spot	
Cue 31	At end of Violinist's mime	(Page 17)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 32	YOUNG MAN: ". . . happy again."	(Page 17)
	Bring up silhouette Spot	
Cue 33	YOUNG MAN: ". . . was unaware."	(Page 18)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 34	YOUNG MAN: ". . . a drawing-room."	(Page 18)
	Bring up silhouette Spot	
Cue 35	The AMBASSADOR bows	(Page 18)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 36	YOUNG MAN: ". . . of farewell."	(Page 19)
	Bring up lights	
Cue 37	VAN PUCK exits	(Page 19)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 38	YOUNG MAN: ". . . to her bed."	(Page 20)
	Bring up lights	
Cue 39	MADAME DE: "I will come."	(Page 20)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 40	When BALLROOM set	(Page 21)
	Bring in silhouette Spot	
Cue 41	During music	(Page 21)
	Dim silhouette Spot slowly out	
Cue 42	YOUNG MAN: ". . . that February morning."	(Page 21)
	Bring up dim lights	
Cue 43	YOUNG MAN: ". . . a long time."	(Page 22)
	BLACK-OUT *all lights except Spot on Young Man*	
Cue 44	YOUNG MAN: ". . . she died."	(Page 22)
	Bring up lights behind gauze	

5382 7815

EFFECTS PLOT

Cue 1	MADAME DE and the AMBASSADOR kiss *Clock strikes the half hour*	(Page 12)
Cue 2	YOUNG MAN: ". . . a long time." *Sound of a door bell*	(Page 22)
Cue 3	YOUNG MAN: ". . . Madame de's face." *Door slam*	(Page 22)
Cue 4	The AMBASSADOR enters *Sound of a door bell*	(Page 22)

KR-563-036